MAKE A LASTING IMPRESSION

(in a good way)

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ETIQUETTE FOR YOU

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Who does not want to be remembered fondly or to make a great impression on others or to be noted for our uniqueness? Well, most of us would answer these questions positively.

Some of us do not wish to be noticed. Good luck with that. People-watching is still a major sport and short of never leaving your burrow, we all are under the observation of others.

So here are three direct, straight forward ways to make a lasting impression that will bring a smile and a kind memory to those you encounter … whether it’s a chance encounter or a long-term encounter.
INTRODUCTIONS
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2. Never pass up the opportunity to do an introduction ... of yourself or others

a. The rule is to introduce a higher-ranking person to a lower ranking person ... not vice versa. In cultures where rank is highly valued, this is an important distinction. In American culture, we are more casual with rank although we do honor people with titles: Doctor, President, Mayor, etc.

b. Regardless of the rule, always exercise the opportunity to do an introduction.

c. It can be simply stated as “Ms./Mr. Higher Rank, this is (name). (Name), this is Ms./Mr. Higher Rank.

d. Add information about each person that helps foster conversation beyond the introduction: items/activities they have in common or their vocation or relationships they may recognize of each other, etc.

e. If you are joining a conversation or wish to strike up a conversation, introduce yourself giving your full name and information that can begin a conversation.
INTRODUCTIONS

3. Handshake

a. This is a simple offer of friendship before you establish a friendship.

i. Anyone can make the offer.
   1. In the case of children, it is usually well received if the child extends their hand first.
   2. In cultures where rank is highly regarded, it is better to allow the woman to extend their hand first.

ii. The handshake:
   1. Extend your hand, thumb up, fingers together
   2. Connect the "web" between the thumb and first finger with the other person's "web".
   3. Use a firm grip, but do not exaggerate it to show power or control.
   4. Pump 2-3 times, relax and release.
   5. It is not recommended to use both hands as this comes across as overly solicitous.
DINING
Dining etiquette has many aspects to it. The regular dining experiences we have call for a brief list to be proficient.

1. **No foods are finger-licking good!**
   a. Our pets can do this because we don’t give them napkins. The rest of us need to use our napkins.

2. **The salt & pepper are married and travel together.**
   a. This assures that they will not be separated by being on opposite sides of the table.

3. **As soon as you’re seated, the napkin goes in your lap.**
   a. If you step away during the meal, the napkin goes, crumpled up, on the side of your plate and awaits your return.

4. **Four-letter utensils go on the left (also four letters) of your plate; five-letter utensils go on the right (also five letters) of your plate.**
   a. Utensils are used in the order placed working in towards the plate.
   b. Once a utensil is used, it does not return to the table. Place along the edge of your plate off the table.
   c. If you drop a utensil while in a restaurant, do not pick it up. It will be retrieved by the wait staff and replaced.
   d. Please note, there is no designated spot for a cell phone at the table. They should be turned off (unless you are expecting an emergency call) and put away.

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5. Bread Plate, Drinks
   a. Make a small letter “b” with your left hand; make a small letter “d” with your right hand. This is an easy reminder that the “b”read plate goes on the left of our dinner plate; “d”rinks go on the right. This will save you from indulging in someone else’s food or drink.

6. Host/Hostess set the lead
   a. When the Hostess takes up her fork, all others at the table can begin to eat.
   b. If there is any doubt of how to handle any portion of the meal, follow the Host/Hostess’ lead. Observe how they handle it and do the same. You’ll always be in sync.

7. Ending the meal
   a. To signal that you are finished eating, the knife and the fork are placed together diagonally on the plate; the knife pointing to the left, the fork next to the knife with the lowest point on the right. This is particularly helpful for wait staff so they can remove dishes and tableware timely.
THANK YOU NOTES
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Thank You Notes have been overlooked and under-valued. I have walked into business offices, spotted a Thank You note decoratively placed within view and asked about them. Invariably, they are not recently received and they contain a reminder to the recipient that someone caught them doing something noteworthy. I myself still display a Thank You Note that is over 20 years old. If that isn’t an example of a lasting impression, then I don’t know what is one.

Here are keys to making your “Thank You Notes” a keeper:

1. Handwritten
   a. Even if your handwriting is not elegant script, take the time to legibly write your "thank you" note. That is one of the key points of this – you took the time to handwrite and express your gratitude to someone else. That alone is noteworthy and valued.

2. Timely
   a. It is normally recommended to send your note within two weeks of the event.
   b. I recommend trying to send it within two days of the event. One of the most powerful parts of a "thank you" note is expressing your personal reaction of gratitude. That fades quickly with time and your note loses its punch.
THANK YOU NOTES

3. Honesty
   a. Sometimes the gift or the act is not noteworthy by our own personal standards. That should not diminish our gratitude that someone expressed care and love towards us.
   b. At the same time, honesty and a positive note are needed. Focus your comments on the person’s graciousness, thoughtfulness, caring/loving nature. You can also comment on positive aspects of the gift or act that you found noteworthy: my favorite color/design/purpose, etc.
   c. It is not necessary to let them know you’ve returned the gift to the store or re-gifted it. That would unravel their good intentions and most likely any prospect of a friendship. It also makes YOU look bad!
These key actions will keep you in the front row of people’s favorites and will serve you well in the community you participate in as a friend, a relative, a business person, a neighbor, a leader and any other roles you serve. We all quickly identify those who are “on our side” and who we can turn to for honesty, encouragement and inspiration. Those relationships are the building blocks we each gather to form alliances, friendships and those we value as “family.” And that is how we forge our connections and take our place in the lives of others to fulfill our value and purpose.

This article provides the most immediate information to make anyone memorable and build confidence in social situations. If you would like to deepen your social skills or have specific questions about manners, etiquette, tricky social situations, keep in touch with our website – www.etiquetteforyou.com – to participate in upcoming workshops, webinars, or blogs. We would love to meet and hear from you personally. Thank you for visiting with us.

**Sandi MacCalla** has over 45 years in industry and business in administration, real estate investments, transportation (airfreight, trucking and bulk commodities), etiquette education, community associations (condominiums and detached homes in large scale, master planned communities) and executive management.

While her core skills are corporate leadership and operations/process improvement, her passion is to equip others with skills and resources to become high achievers in their chosen field. Sandi brings practical, sustainable knowledge to life skills, encourages others to grow and embrace change and success.